



BLUERAINCOAT



Lunchtime Theatre
2010

At the
Hawk's Well
**The Cat
and the Moon**

by WB Yeats



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Foreword Yeats Project

Welcome to our Yeats Project 2010. Under this project Blue Raincoat continues to produce our selection of dramatic works by W.B. Yeats on an annual basis.

We take this opportunity to update you on our programme so far this year and to mention upcoming events during 2010. The Yeats Project has been preceded this year by two successful tours. In early spring we undertook a nationwide tour of *At-Swim-Two-Birds*. This was followed in May by sell-out performances of *The Third Policeman* in Glasgow and Edinburgh. We return to Glasgow and Edinburgh with *At-Swim-Two-Birds* in 2011.

In October we revisit the works of Eugene Ionesco with our new production of *Rhinoceros*. Previous works we have staged by Ionesco are *The Bald Soprano* (2006) and *The Chairs* (2007).

The Blue Raincoat Theatre Resource Project this year sees the continuation of our Lecture Workshop programme commenced in 2007. In November, voice coach David Goldsworthy from the Roy Hart School in Melerargue France, returns to offer a further series of voice development classes for actors. 2010 is the second full year of operation for our Theatre Library. This year we have added visual display facilities for the in-house viewing of our collection of contemporary theatre studies and productions on DVD.

2010 is also the second year of the Mobile Theatre initiative of our Theatre Resource project. Through the support of the Arts Council of Ireland's Touring and Dissemination Grant we will tour *At The Hawk's Well*

and *The Cat and the Moon* to eight venues around the northwest in November and December under this programme initiative.

Finally in 2010, again through our Theatre Resource Project, we commenced the workshop elements of our ScRIPT programme in March. ScRIPT (Scheme for Regional Interaction with Professional Theatre), sees us delivering an extensive range of theatre related workshops between March and November. Through this programme Blue Raincoat are pioneering a new developmental and mentoring model between professional arts organisations and local arts-related community concerns. The project is being supported by County Sligo Leader Partnership Company, under the aegis of Peace III, through the Community and Capability Training element of the current Regional Development Programme. In tandem with the workshop programme County Sligo Leader Partnership and Peace III are mentoring the establishment of a permanent cross border theatre network.

Our Yeats Project 2010 features *At The Hawk's Well* and *The Cat and the Moon*. We thank you for being with us for these performances. We hope you enjoy the productions at that we will see you at our other events in 2010.

Malcolm Hamilton

Niall Henry

At The Hawk's Well

An old man climbs to a mystical well in a high and barren place every day for fifty years, seeking to drink the magic waters of eternal life that one day will fill the well. He has wasted his life away waiting for that day that only “the holy shades that dance upon the desolate mountain” know when will occur. The well is guarded by a woman of the Sidhe, a she-hawk, to clean out the well and drive the cattle off. This day, on foot of a rumour told over too much wine a young Cuchulain has sailed from Ireland to find this enchanted well and drink its waters.



Cast & Artistic Team

Musicians

John Carty
Fiona McGeown
Sandra O Malley

Guardian of the Well
Old Man
Young Man

Marketa Formanova
Ciarán McCauley
Niall Henry

Director
Lighting Design/Operation
Sound Design/Operation
Set Design
Masks
Production Manager

Kellie Hughes
Michael Cummins
Joe Hunt
Jo Conway
Bettina Seitz
Peter Davey

The Cat and The Moon

Two beggars – one blind and one lame – search for a holy well reputed to host a supernatural saint with the power to cure their afflictions.

Cast & Artistic Team

Musicians / Saint

Ciarán McCauley
Fiona McGeown
Sandra O Malley
Niall Henry
John Carty

Blind Beggar

Lame Beggar

Director

Kellie Hughes

Lighting Design / Operation

Michael Cummins

Sound Design / Operation

Joe Hunt

Set Design

Jo Conway

Masks

Michael Cummins

Bettina Seitz

Production Manager

Peter Davey

Poster/Programme Photographs

Ger Duignan

Laura Hunt

Blue Raincoat Theatre Company would like to thank Jo Conway, Jampa Ling Tibetan Buddhist Centre, Aidan McCauley, Druid Theatre Company and Maura Hynes – Sligo Drama Circle

Lunchtime Theatre

Biographies

John Carty

John trained at the Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College, Dublin, graduating in 1988. He worked with Co-Motion Theatre Company and Graffiti Theatre Company before returning to Sligo to become a founder member of Blue Raincoat Theatre Company. He has since trained at The Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique, London, at the Saratoga International Theatre Institute, New York with Anne Bogart and at the Roy Hart Theatre in Malargues, France. John has appeared in most of the company's productions to date. In recent years, he has also directed a number of one-act plays at the Factory Performance Space.

Jo Conway

Jo is currently a Lecturer in Applied Social Studies and Performing Arts Degree Programmes at IT Sligo. She was an Artist in Residence with the Arts Council of Ireland 1989-1991 and a Lecturer National College of Art and Design Dublin. She has also worked as Outreach Lecturer: Opera Theatre Co.Dublin, Outreach Lecturer: Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) Dublin and as a Freelance Arts Facilitator –Sligo Leader Partnership. Between 1980 – 2001 Jo worked as a designer with the Abbey Theatre Dublin, Gate Theatre Dublin, Opera Theatre Co Dublin, The Ark Dublin, Dublin Theatre Festival Co (Hong Kong), Hells Kitchen Productions Dublin, The Royal Flemish Opera Antwerp, The Royal Court Theatre London, The Half Moon Theatre London, Wexford Opera, Project Arts Centre, Irish and US Tour O'Casey Theatre Co, Imagine Films Los Angeles as Key Costumier 'Far and Away' Samson Films, & Co costume designer Zanita Films.

Michael Cummins

Michael is from Dublin and studied painting at N.C.A.D. He has designed sets and lighting, and acted as production designer for many of Blue Raincoat productions including *Hamlet*, *Once Time*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking glass*, *Macbeth* and *The Strange Voyage of Donald Crowhurst*.

Peter Davey

Peter is from Tubbercurry in Sligo and has a lifetime involvement in amateur drama having worked extensively with Beeneeze Theatre Company and The Phoenix Players. He has been the recipient of national amateur drama awards for both acting and lighting design. He is currently Production Manager at The Factory Performance Space.

Marketa Formanova

Marketa is originally from the Czech Republic and has lived in Sligo for the past four years. She trained in contemporary dance at the Duncan Centrum Conservatory, Prague and has performed with Andre Jolles from Teatr Novogo Fronta, Nude Ants and Benedetta Reuter, Prague. Marketa currently teaches movement in IT Sligo and is a member of Kate Wilson's Contemporary dance company. *At the Hawk's Well* is Marketa's first performance with Blue Raincoat Theatre Company.

Niall Henry

Niall is from Sligo and is Artistic Director of Blue Raincoat. He studied in Paris with Corrine Soum and Maximillion Decroux and returned to Sligo in 1991 to co-found Blue Raincoat with Malcolm Hamilton. He has directed six of Malcolm's plays, most recently *The Strange Voyage of Donald Crowhurst* and *A Brief Taste of Lighting*. Other shows directed for Blue Raincoat include *Hamlet*, *A Mid Summer's Night Dream*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, J Clarke's adaptations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* (co-production Peacock theatre) and Brendan Ellis' *Hollow in the Sand*. He has directed on two occasions for the National Theatre, *Playboy of the Western World* in 2002 and more recently, Colm Toibin's *Beauty in a Broken Place* for Abbey One Hundred. Most recently Niall directed Jocelyn Clark's two stage adaptations of Flann O'Brien's, *The Third Policeman* and *At-Swim-Two-Birds*.

Kellie Hughes

Kellie first performed with Blue Raincoat Theatre Company in 2004. Initially trained in dance, she performed in the World Tour of Riverdance-The Show in 1996/97 before graduating from University of Ulster, Coleraine in 2000 with BA first class honours in Theatre and History. She then completed an MA in physical theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. She spent three years training with Corinne Soum and Steve Wasson, last assistants of Etienne Decroux and directors of the Theatre de L'Ange Fou and the Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique. After receiving her diploma Kellie returned to Ireland to perform in Blue Raincoat's international showcase of *The Strange Voyage of Donald Crowhurst*. Kellie is guest lecturer in University of Ulster, N.U.I. Galway and I.T. Sligo and is Training Coordinator for Blue Raincoat Theatre Company. Kellie also directed *The Cat and the Moon* for Blue Raincoat's Yeats Project in 2009.

Joe Hunt

Joe is Technical Manager and Sound Designer with Blue Raincoat Theatre Company since 2001. Prior to this, Joe also worked with the Hawk's Well theatre on lighting and sound operation as well as stage construction. Joe is also the multi-media for Blue Raincoat Theatre Company productions.

Ciarán McCauley

Ciarán is from Sligo and has been a core member of Blue Raincoat Theatre since October 1991. He has trained at the Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique, London with Corrine Soum and Steve Wasson, at the Saratoga International Theatre Institute, New York with Anne Bogart and at the Roy Hart Theatre in Malargues, France. He has performed in the *Playboy of the Western World* at the Peacock Theatre, Dublin directed by Niall Henry and has worked with Crossroads Repertory Theatre, Indiana. Ciarán has directed productions of *At the Hawkswell*, *Purgatory* and *The Cat and The Moon* and has been a guest tutor at Queens University, Belfast, and NUI Galway.

Fiona McGeown

Originally from Armagh, Fiona has been working with Blue Raincoat theatre company for 15 years. She has performed in many of the companies productions to date including *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Strange voyage of Donald Crowhurst* and most recently *The Third Policeman*. She trained with the Gaiety school of acting in Dublin, Anne Bogart's New York based company Saratoga International Theatre Institute and with Corinne Soum and Steven Wasson at L'ecole de mime corporeal dramatique in London. Fiona runs her own drama school for children based in County Sligo.

Sandra O Malley

Sandra is a graduate of the Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique. She studied under Corinne Soum and Steven Wasson, Etienne Decroux's last assistants. Having performed with their company, she returned to Ireland and has been working with Blue Raincoat Theatre Company since 1997. Sandra has provided workshops both nationally and internationally for University College Galway, the Drama League of Wales and Potsdan International Dance festival, Germany. She has also directed productions for the Sligo Youth Theatre.

Bettina Seitz

Bettina Seitz was born in Germany in 1963. She has studied sculpture at the Freie Kunstschule, Nürtingen, Germany and the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti in Turin, Italy. She has been working from her studio in Sligo since 1993. Stylizing the human form, Bettina's sculptures in bronze or stone composite, often possess an ethereal and meditative quality. She has exhibited her work in various countries, including Ireland, UK, USA, Germany, France, Italy and has worked on many private and public commissions here and abroad. Commissioned work in County Sligo includes sculptures at Nazareth House Nursing Home, Sligo and at Markree Castle, Homefarm. Her work can be found in private and public collections around the world, including the Boyle Civic Collection, Mc Cann Fitzgerald Collection (Dublin), Chinthurst Sculpture Garden (Surrey, UK) and collections in Saudi Arabia, the UK, the USA, Germany, France, Portugal, Spain, Italy and South Africa. In 2007 Bettina designed the Volta Award for the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival, which is awarded for career achievement. For further information please see www.bettinaseitz.eu

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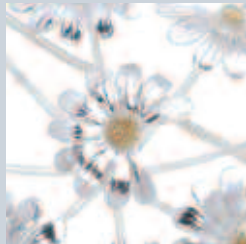
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W.B. Yeats & the search for a passionate theatre

“We have to write or find plays that will make the theatre a place of intellectual excitement”

In their study *Yeats and The Noh*, Sekine and Murray point out that from as early as 1903 Yeats was proclaiming radical ideas in a search for a new type of Irish Theatre, opposed to the naturalistic style that predominated. “We have to write or find plays that will make the theatre a place of intellectual excitement” he proclaimed. “If we are to do this we must learn that beauty and truth are always justified of themselves, and that their creation is a greater service to our country than writing that compromises either in the seeming service of a cause”. *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* had been staged just one year before and Yeats is expressing tacit remorse that his own art in that instance had been propaganda.

In the first play of the Cuchulain cycle - *On Baile's Strand* (1904) - Yeats applies himself epically to the great characters and sagas of Irish mythology. If *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* was set against the historic backdrop of 1798, Cuchulain by contrast was a creature of mythology and therefore could be adapted to Yeats's overall cultural agenda. *The Green Helmet* says as much about Yeats's personal disdain, bitterness and disillusion with Irish theatre audiences as it does about a cultural agenda. Nonetheless Yeats is still using Cuchulain and the tribes of Irish myth to make his point, and his disillusion was matched

only by the depth of searching he was still engaged in to find a keener artistic truth for Irish theatre.

By the time of *At The Hawks Well* (1917) and *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (1919), Yeats was in pursuit of “passion” and “the moment of intense life”. He was morphing and merging the ideas of Gordon Craig and Noh theatre to do so. A new foundation for his cultural agenda was based on the individual passionate artist expressing the often savage vulnerability of human character. In these plays Yeats' characters are less the creatures of mythic saga or nationalistic self sacrifice and are much more rooted in individual tragic human passion where Yeats could invest tangible personal experience. Indeed it could be said Yeats is now free entirely of myth and allegory, replacing them through Noh, with a ritual that had no basis in Irish tradition whatsoever.

By the time of his final play *The Death of Cuchulain* (1939) Noh has in turn been turned over. A garrulous old author sits spitting out the vitriol of life as the band of musicians he has carelessly assembled that morning for the opening ritual wait back stage. Yeats the passionate old artist has dressed himself in mythical rags and put himself directly on the stage.

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W.B. Yeats & Gordon Craig



Edward Gordon Craig (1872 – 1966) was one of the most influential theatre designers and directors of the last century. Much of his influence on today's theatre is due to the fact that many of his ideas were deemed at the time they were being evolved as being too radical or impractical both in his native England and here in Ireland. This resulted in his move to the continent in order to find or create work in more open traditions and more importantly in his writing down and publishing 25 books and hundreds of articles on his theories. Where the work of many other directors and designers was lost over time due to the transient nature of theatre, Craig's thinking and designs have survived in abundance.

From 1908 on Craig had been advocating a style of acting that was called "symbolic gesture". Use of the mask was integral to Craig's ideas, and Yeats was deeply influenced by him. Craig designed a mask for the Fool in a new production of *The Hour Glass* in 1911. He also designed the mask for *On Baile's Strand* (The Blind Man). These two designs remained always in Yeats's thoughts as central to his

concept of the mask. Also Yeats's decision to revise several of his early plays at this time was closely bound up with his interest on scene design and staging, and these revisions using Craig's concept of stage space anticipated Yeats's later adaptations of the Noh drama. Yeats like Craig, (or perhaps because of him) also rejoiced in the use of a bare simple stage. Gordon Craig's style of stage decoration, with its symbolic, abstract scenery, very much encouraged Yeats's break with nineteenth century illusionism*

What both Yeats and Craig had in common was that radical theatrical thinking served to increasingly alienate them from their immediate theatrical communities. Yeats's broader canvas, his often reactionary experimentation shifted him – much to his own delight it seems – off the stage of the Abbey into the drawing rooms of friends and acquaintances. Craig's focused life long discussion specifically with theatre alienated him to the continent for most of his working life. If Yeats pursued the ideal of personal passion and poetry within and without theatre, ultimately locating himself as the passionate artist within his own theatrical work, Craig spent a lifetime pursuing a purity of form that was and remains unique to theatre. Yeats is one of the seminal influences in 20th century literature and modern Irish culture, but Gordon Craig is a much more specifically felt and relevant force within theatre to this day.

* (Paragraph drawn from *Yeats And The Noh, A comparative study* by Sekine & Murray)

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BLUERAINCOAT
THEATRICAL
PRODUCTIONS

Artistic Director:

Niall Henry

Writer in Residence:

Malcolm Hamilton

Ensemble:

John Carty

Ciaran McCauley

Kellie Hughes

Fiona McGeown

Sandra O Malley

Financial Controller:

Teresa Needham

Technical Manager:

Joe Hunt

Production Manager:

Peter Davey

Front of House:

Gretta Currid

Accountants:

Sherlock Hamilton & Co

Solicitors:

McDermott, Creed and Martyn

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